

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
CONTRACTS COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
OCTOBER 12, 2016**

**ATTENDANCE:** Jeanette Herron, Co-Chair; Anthony Paoletto, Alfredo Castillo,  
James Holloway, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Milta Feliciano  
*Co-Chair Jack Banta joined the meeting at 6:03*  
*Jose Casco joined the meeting at 6:05.*  
*M. Evette Brantley joined the meeting at 6:05*

**STAFF:** Kimberly Staley, Assistant CAO  
Maritza Bond, Nominee for Director Health and Human Services  
Dan Roach, Mayor's Office  
Tom Gaudett, Mayors Office  
Mary McBride-Lee, Council Member  
Mark Anastasi, City Attorney's Office

**CALL TO ORDER**

Co-Chair Herron called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. A quorum was present.

She reviewed the procedures of the meeting to all those present.

**AGENDA**

**APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 13, 2016**  
**(REGULAR MEETING)**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER FELICIANO MOVED TO APPROVE THE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 13, 2016 (REGULAR MEETING).  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED.**

**3 IN FAVOR  
2 ABSENTIONS (AM VIZZO-PANICCIA AND A. CASTILLO)**

**ITEM 93-15**  
**MASTER STATE/MUNICIPALITY AGREEMENT FOR THE READJUSTMENT,**  
**RELOCATION AND/OR REMOVAL OF MUNICIPAL FACILITIES ON HIGHWAY**  
**PROJECTS**

No one was present to speak on this resolution.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER FELICIANO MOVED TO TABLE ITEM 93-15, MASTER  
STATE/MUNICIPALITY AGREEMENT FOR THE READJUSTMENT,  
RELOCATION AND/OR REMOVAL OF MUNICIPAL FACILITIES ON**

- HIGHWAY PROJECTS.**  
\*\* **COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**  
\*\* **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**ITEM 101-15**  
**DRAFT LEASE AGREEMENT RE: A SITE AT TRUMBULL GARDENS TO SERVE AS**  
**A SUBSTATION FOR THE PPOLICE DEPARTMENT AND COMMUNITY CENTER**  
**FOR RESIDENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN THAT COMMUNITY**

Council Member McBride-Lee came forward to comment on this resolution, saying that she thinks it could be useful, but is a little confused about the community center there because it is only one small room. She stated she wants to find out more about what this means and what it would be utilized for. Co-Chair added that a police department substation should say it is a substation and not a substation/community center, suggesting the resolution be tabled.

- \*\* **COUNCIL MEMBER FELICIANO MOVED TO TABLE ITEM 101-15, DRAFT LEASE AGREEMENT RE: A SITE AT TRUMBULL GARDENS TO SERVE AS A SUBSTATION FOR THE PPOLICE DEPARTMENT AND COMMUNITY CENTER FOR RESIDENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN THAT COMMUNITY.**  
\*\* **COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**  
\*\* **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**ITEM 193-15**  
**MAYORAL NOMINATION OF MARITZA BOND FOR THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH**  
**POSITION**

Ms. Staley came forward to speak about this resolution, saying that she wanted to talk about the process by which Ms. Bond was chosen as the nominee for this position, after which she would take any questions about the process, and then Ms. Bond would come forward and address the Committee.

Ms. Staley stated there has been no Health Director for a while and they asked for the opportunity to interview and also present a Health Director. She said they had been given a deadline of the end of September, but an extension to October 17 was granted, and they moved forward to get a person for that position.

Ms. Staley described the advertising process for the position which was extensive, and stated, from that process, they received 22 applications. She said that she and Eric from Human Resources had reviewed the applications and determined who was going to be interviewed based on the backgrounds, skills, abilities, saying that there was a requirement set. She continued that there were seven final candidates who underwent a very rigorous and structured process by five panelists – the panelists being Ms. Staley, Danny Roach, Jack McCarthy, former City of Bridgeport Director of Health, and Carolyn Salsgiver, Senior Vice-President at Bridgeport Hospital. There were nine questions, Ms. Staley said, which were rated and which were focused on competency in addition to being focused on a broad view of what Bridgeport does by connecting the questions to the needs of the City. Ms. Staley stated that, after each candidate was rated, there was a consensus that Ms. Bond had scored the highest, and Ms. Bond's reference

check was a “ten”. She continued that Caroline Salsgiver also did informal references, since she is in the health industry, and the applicant, unaware that these informal references were being conducted, rated very highly on these also. Ms. Staley stated that Ms. Bond's proven ability to bring in grants was the “icing on the cake.” The recommendation was made to the Mayor who then interviewed and nominated Ms. Bond. Ms. Staley asked if the Committee had any questions.

Co-Chair Banta asked whether it was possible to find out the test scores of the final seven candidates to which Ms. Staley answered that they had all the ratings which are confidential. Co-Chair Banta asked if it was a matter of public record to which Ms. Staley responded that she suspected that it was, but that they had all the questions and the ratings.

Council Member Feliciano thanked Ms. Staley for putting a process in place and said she appreciates Ms. Staley's time in doing this, continuing to say that she hopes this is something that will be used moving forward with hiring any individual in the City of Bridgeport.

Council Member McBride-Lee asked whether the present Director of Health had applied for the job to which Ms. Staley answered that the present Director was one of the seven. Council Member McBride-Lee stated that she would like to see where the present Director stood in the scoring before she votes. Attorney Anastasi interjected with the comment that there was a confidentiality issue and these applicants for this high level executive position are entitled to confidentiality. He continued to say that, obviously, when someone is selected, that is a different issue, but that it is not appropriate to advertise the names in public, since some of the applicants have other jobs and they do not necessarily want that information out there. Council Member McBride-Lee asked Ms. Staley if it is not possible to provide a council person with the information they request to which Ms. Staley responded that all the information, i.e. the questions and the ratings for the seven candidates, is all there in Human Resources. Attorney Anastasi interjected with an express exception on the previously mentioned F.O.I. which stated that applicants for high-level executive positions are a confidential process. Council Member McBride-Lee said that her reason for bringing this up is because the Council is going to be asked to vote on something they know nothing about. Mr. Roach commented that Ms. Bond will be given an opportunity to speak with a question and answer period for the Committee. Council Member McBride-Lee continued with her point that she wants to vote for the best candidate and that it would be remiss for her to vote for a candidate that someone else thinks is the best one. She concluded by commenting that she thinks the process used was fantastic and the Ms. Bond is a fantastic person, but she wants to know about the other candidates, especially about the present Director of Health.

Co-Chair Herron asked Ms. Staley how many out of the seven final candidates are from Bridgeport to which Ms. Staley answered that there were three. Co-Chair Herron commented that she thought there were four.

Attorney Anastasi stated that he wanted to correct the record, saying that it is not fair to say the Committee does not know anything about the candidate. He said they know that the candidate has been screened, they know that the candidate has been subjected to a rigorous process, they know the Mayor has nominated the candidate, and something Attorney Anastasi said the Committee might not know is that not only does the candidate meet the qualifications of the job,

but the candidate also meets the satisfaction of the Commissioner and has been congratulated by the Commissioner on this selection. Attorney Anastasi acknowledged that this does not mean that other candidates may not also be qualified, but he directed the Committee that its role in this is not to be part of the selection process, but instead to approve the Mayor's nominee if appropriate. Ms. Staley interjected, saying that she had sent all seven resumes to the Commissioner and, after reviewing all seven applications and resumes, he agreed with the selection.

Council Member Holloway wanted to comment about the Committee's role in this resolution, making reference to the three branches of government and saying that they are the legislative body. He continued that whenever an executive branch of government wants to appoint someone to a position, the role of the legislative branch is to either deny or appoint, stating that is the job of the Committee in regard to this resolution – is to either deny or to approve, that is it. He remarked that all the other stuff about all the other candidates makes no difference, that the Mayor's appointee was present at the meeting and all they have to do is to approve it or deny it.

Ms. Bond then came forward to speak to the Committee and thanked all those present for the opportunity to be there. She spoke about her background, saying she has been in public health for 16 years during which time she has been doing work from the local public health level to running a non-profit organization. She said that when she worked on the public health level in Ansonia, she was there for five years and worked for the immunization program, following procedures and guidelines to make sure children in that area were being vaccinated in a timely fashion. She said she also educated health care professionals in that area. She stated that she then transferred to the AHEC non-profit sector because AHEC had the Department of Public Health Immunization Program for the City of Bridgeport, which she said she took as a challenge because, at that time, the City of Bridgeport was known to have the lowest immunization rate and she felt called to do that. She said that, in less than eight months, she had created partnerships in the area and had increased the immunization rate by 10%, but made clear that she takes no credit for this and instead credits it to the partnerships.

Ms. Bond stated that one of her signature programs is the Medical Interpreter Program whereby she could look at the qualifications of bilingual individuals. She said she was charged to start the program and developed a strategic plan and she was able to train some of the employees in the Health Department. She said that she then transitioned to run the AHEC Network in New London County and Windham County, but the Medical Interpreter Program has remained her program since 2007. Ms. Bond stated that she has also received a grant to provide state-wide health information literacy in regard to the Affordable Care Act.

Ms. Bond then address the topic of how to streamline funding opportunities and how to become efficient, saying that in the past year, alone, she has brought in 24 grants to the organization she is now running. She stated that she is very committed to people of color and to health-equity for individuals who are not meeting health outcomes and not having quality of life. Therefore, she said, when she saw the opportunity for the City of Bridgeport, she, of course, wanted to take on the challenge, telling the Committee that it has been a long-term aspiration of hers and she looks forward to the possibility of also working with the Committee members as constituents, since the members represent districts in the City.

Ms. Bond thanked the committee for its time and asked if there were any questions.

Co-Chair Banta wanted to know who Ms. Bond's grant writer is to which Ms. Bond responded that she initially wrote the grants, but now she has hired a consultant to write the grants after she has developed the concepts, developed the budgets, and identified the programs needing expansion. She said also that she also does the grant reporting on the federal, state and local levels and applies for grants on all these levels.

Co-Chair Herron commented to Ms. Bond that, in the Health Department at the present time, there is basically a skeleton crew and asked how Ms. Bond is going to manage that. Ms. Bond answered that one of the things she did in applying for the position was to look at the approved budget from the health administration specifically, explaining that she has been looking through each of the departments and one of her first priorities will be to do a workforce assessment to identify skills and gaps and then to look at grants that may have been lost in the past to try to regain them to expand the workforce and create jobs for local residents.

Council Member Feliciano commented that she, Council Member Castillo and another Council Member had worked very hard against the previous health administrator because of the needle exchange program which is now being handled by a non-profit organization, saying that she still gets phone call complaints about that every day. Council Member Feliciano wanted to know how Ms. Bond, with her experience in grant writing, would fill in that gap. Ms. Bond stated that, if that is still a priority, she would work with a leadership team to come up with a plan and to identify funding opportunities, and also she would work closely with Tina to conduct an assessment. Ms. Bond also said she would look at previous models used in the health department to find out if she could work from or adapt these previous models. Council Member Feliciano said that her question was more specifically related to Ms. Bond's strong background in grants and, because that program is now being administered by a non-profit, she wanted to know if Ms. Bond had any suggestions about how to fill in that gap. Ms. Bond answered by saying that, if a non-profit is now handling that initiative, then the Health Department could become a link to that organization and then there would be no gap. Ms. Bond also said that, if a non-profit is working on this, and she would not want to duplicate services as it is not a good use of resources, so she said she would have to look at this carefully when coming up with a health needs strategic plan. Council Member Feliciano asked Ms. Bond in regard to the budget that was previously in place what she feels the City of Bridgeport is lacking in the Health Department. Ms. Bond answered by saying that one of the things she is interested in learning more about is the Social Services Department because they have lost a lot of programs and she wants to know why, and she will look toward her working relationships with funders to see how to get the programs back. Council Member Feliciano thanked Ms. Bond for her answers.

Council Member Brantley asked Ms. Bond what her expertise is regarding lead. Ms. Bond answered that, being the only bilingual employee in the Health Department for five years, she helped with translating for people who had complaints about lead and, thereby, learned a lot about the lead program and lead education. Ms. Bond said she was exposed to the regulation pieces of how to file complaints, and she said they streamlined their services with all the departments to do health education initiatives. Ms. Bond referred to the grant which the City of Bridgeport lost for lead programs and she stated it is a priority of hers to get that funding back. Council Member Brantley asked why it is a priority for Ms. Bond to which Ms. Bond answered

that it is a quality of life issue. Council Member Brantley asked Ms. Bond whether she has looked at the lead issues in Bridgeport to which Ms. Bond answered that she had and that she has learned about the Housing Department raising the standard for Certificate of Application Occupancy in regard to lead levels, saying she is interested in working with that department to accomplish these goals. Council Member Brantley asked if Ms. Bond knew the acceptable lead levels to which Ms. Bond answered that she had not memorized the lead levels, but has begun reading up on that.

Council Member Castillo asked Ms. Bond if she would be willing to move to Bridgeport because of meetings and the demands of the job were she to be appointed to the position of Health Director to which Ms. Bond answered that she would. Council Member McBride-Lee commented that she was very impressed with Ms. Bond, her reasons being that Ms. Bond did not think that any question was too small and that she was very direct. Council Member Holloway made the comment that the State of Connecticut has a 25-mile radius on the allowance regarding where an employee can live in relation to where they work, saying that an employee of Bridgeport can live in Farmingdale, Long Island and still be in compliance with state law. Council Member Feliciano asked Attorney Anastasi how long the contract is to which Attorney Anastasi answered that it is a five-year contract by statute from the date of appointment and until the successor is appointed. Council Member Feliciano then asked if the contract is already written up and can be reviewed to which Attorney Anastasi answered in the negative, saying it is not a contract. Attorney Anastasi stated, to his knowledge, that it is an appointment where the candidate receives an appointment letter, the salary is already established and the benefits will be standard.

Council Member Brantley asked, in terms of the contract, if the Mayor, for some reason, decides to end this contract, will that have to come before the Committee to which Attorney Anastasi stated that, in the case where there was a contract, the Council would be involved, but said that there is not a contract in this case. Council Member Brantley continued along the same line of questioning to Attorney Anastasi, asking if the Mayor were to let the appointee go ... Attorney Anastasi interjected with the statement that the Mayor does not have the authority to take such action, and Council Member Brantley continued to ask about a scenario where the appointee is not performing up to the standard. Mr. Roach interjected, saying that the Mayor may make such a request from the State Health Commissioner.. with Attorney Anastasi adding that there is a process under the Charter that says the appointing authority has the ability to remove somebody for malfeasance through a statutory process. Short of the failure to perform, however, Attorney Anastasi stated that the removal of an appointee would require an open, public process and would require the consent of the State Commissioner because there has to be someone in place at all times. Council Member Brantley said she is concerned that, if Ms. Bond was not measuring up to the standard of running the department appropriately and there was not any malfeasance and the Mayor decides ... Attorney Anastasi interjected that Council Member Brantley had triggered an interesting question, and stated that this is not a unilateral appointment. He continued that it is a Mayoral nomination and a Council approval, stating that, if it ever got to that, they would have to visit the question of what, if any, role the Council would play. Council Member Brantley referred to the history of what has happened in this position as being the reason for her questions, saying that she did not want to see the City involved in the controversies that have occurred in the past.

**\*\* CO-CHAIR BANTA MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM 193-15, MAYORAL  
NOMINATION OF MARITZA BOND FOR THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH  
POSITION.  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED.**

**6 IN FAVOR  
1 OPPOSED (AMYMARIE VIZZO-PANICCIA)  
1 ABSENTION (MILTA FELICIANO)**

Co-Chair Herron thanked Ms. Bond and Ms. Bond thanked the Committee.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER FELICIANO SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Co-Chair Herron adjourned the meeting at 6:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Nerina Kagan  
Telesco Secretarial Services